

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BERN 05118 191631Z

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SUBJECT: REGULATORY STANDARDS FOR NUCLEAR POWER

REF: STATE 239308

1. FOLLOWING INFORMATION KEYED TO PARAS REFTEL PROVIDED BY DR. CLAUDE ZANGGER, DIRECTOR SWISS NUCLEAR ENERGY DIVISION, AS INTERIM REPLY TO REFTEL REQUEST. MORE DETAILED INFORMATION WILL BE PROVIDED IN JANUARY.

A.1. SWISS LEAN HEAVILY ON US FOR SAFETY TECHNOLOGY AND REGULATIONS AND USE IAEA FOR MAXIMUM EMISSION STANDARDS. IN ACTUAL FACT SWISS EMISSION TO ATMOSPHERE STANDARDS MORE STRINGENT THAN IAEA BUT HIGHER THAN PERMITTED IN US. RELEASE INTO RIVERS ALSO LESS THAN IAEA MAXIMUM.

A.2. SWITZERLAND HAS NO FACILITIES FOR MINING, REPROCESS-
ING, OR FABRICATION OF NUCLEAR FUELS.

A.3. SWISS FOLLOW IAEA REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS FOR
TRANSPORT BY ROAD, IATA (INTERNATIONAL AIR TRANSPORT ASSO-
CIATION) RULES ON AIR TRANSPORT, AND RID (REGULATIONS ON
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PAGE 02 BERN 05118 191631Z

INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT OF DANGEROUS MATERIALS) FOR TRANS-

PORTATION BY RAIL.

A.4. RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT RELATIVELY SIMPLE PROBLEM SINCE FUEL ELEMENTS FABRICATED OUTSIDE OF SWITZERLAND AND AFTER USE ARE SENT OUT OF COUNTRY FOR REPROCESSING. OPERATIONAL WASTES (WATER, SLUDGE, CONTAMINATED CLOTHES, ETC.) ARE MIXED WITH CONCRETE AND POURED INTO STAINLESS STEEL CONTAINERS. CONTAINERS NOW STORED TEMPORARILY AT EACH NUCLEAR PLANT SITE IN SPECIALLY DESIGNED BUILDING PENDING DEVELOPMENT OF PERMANENT UNDERGROUND STORAGE FACILITIES.

B. ZANGGER SAID HIS OFFICE RECEIVES ALL US NUCLEAR ENVIRONMENTAL AND SAFETY LAWS AND REGULATIONS AND GENERALLY US AND SWISS PRACTICES ARE SIMILAR.

C. RESPONSIBILITY FOR GENERAL PROTECTION OF ENVIRONMENT SHARED BY FEDERAL AND CANTONAL GOVERNMENTS UNDER A VARIETY OF LAWS. CANTONS HAVE LICENSING AUTHORITY FOR NUCLEAR POWER INSTALLATIONS AS WELL AS ALL OTHER INDUSTRIAL PLANTS, WHILE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PROVIDES STANDARDS AND SUPERVISION. ONLY SPECIFIC STUDY REQUIRED IN NUCLEAR FIELD IS ON ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF COLLING TOWERS WHICH IS PREPARED BY FEDERAL COMMISSION OF EXPERTS.

D. PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS OF THREE REACTORS NOW IN OPERATION WILL BE PROVIDED BY PRIVATE UTILITY OPERATORS IN JANUARY.

E. ONLY COMMERCIAL SIZE NUCLEAR POWER ACCIDENT IN SWITZERLAND WAS JULY 1971 FIRE AT MUHLEBERG BEFORE PLANT HAD BEGUN OPERATION. FIRE WAS CONTAINED IN TURBINE ROOM AND DID NOT REACH NUCLEAR PART OF INSTALLATION. THERE WAS NO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT, BUT STARTUP OF POWER PRODUCTION DELAYED ONE YEAR.
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